

III. SUGGESTED ROUTE AND VIGNETTES

Introduction

During the course of the Civil War, the struggle for control of Vicksburg spanned about a year and involved operations separated by hundreds of miles. Because of the wide chronological and geographical span of the campaign, it has been necessary to exercise selectivity in packaging a staff ride that can be executed within a reasonable amount of time. Actions at outlying places, such as the raid on Holly Springs, Grierson's raid, the battle of Jackson, and the siege of Port Hudson have been omitted here to save travel time, even though they were significant elements of the overall campaign.

The resulting itinerary involves considerable driving time. The full itinerary, with discussions at each stand, will absorb approximately three days. Individual groups can tailor this schedule to accommodate the time available to them or to focus upon aspects of the campaign that are of particular interest to them.

In following this itinerary, be aware that not all of the stands are designated by signs or monuments. For this reason, directions are as specific as possible in terms of mileages, road names, and landmarks. Even so, roads and landmarks may change over time, and mileages are no more accurate than the odometer of the vehicle. A set of topographic maps (see bibliography) and route advice from park personnel will help prevent unintentional detours.

DAY 1

Stand 1

Snyder's ("Haynes") Bluff

Directions: To reach Snyder's Bluff from Vicksburg, go east on I-20 to exit 5A, then north on U.S. Route 61 to Redwood. At Redwood, turn on State Route 3 north. Approximately 1.1 miles north of Redwood, on the left, there is a pull-off and a historical marker. Park here and find a spot where the Yazoo River is visible through the vegetation (see map 3 on page 82).

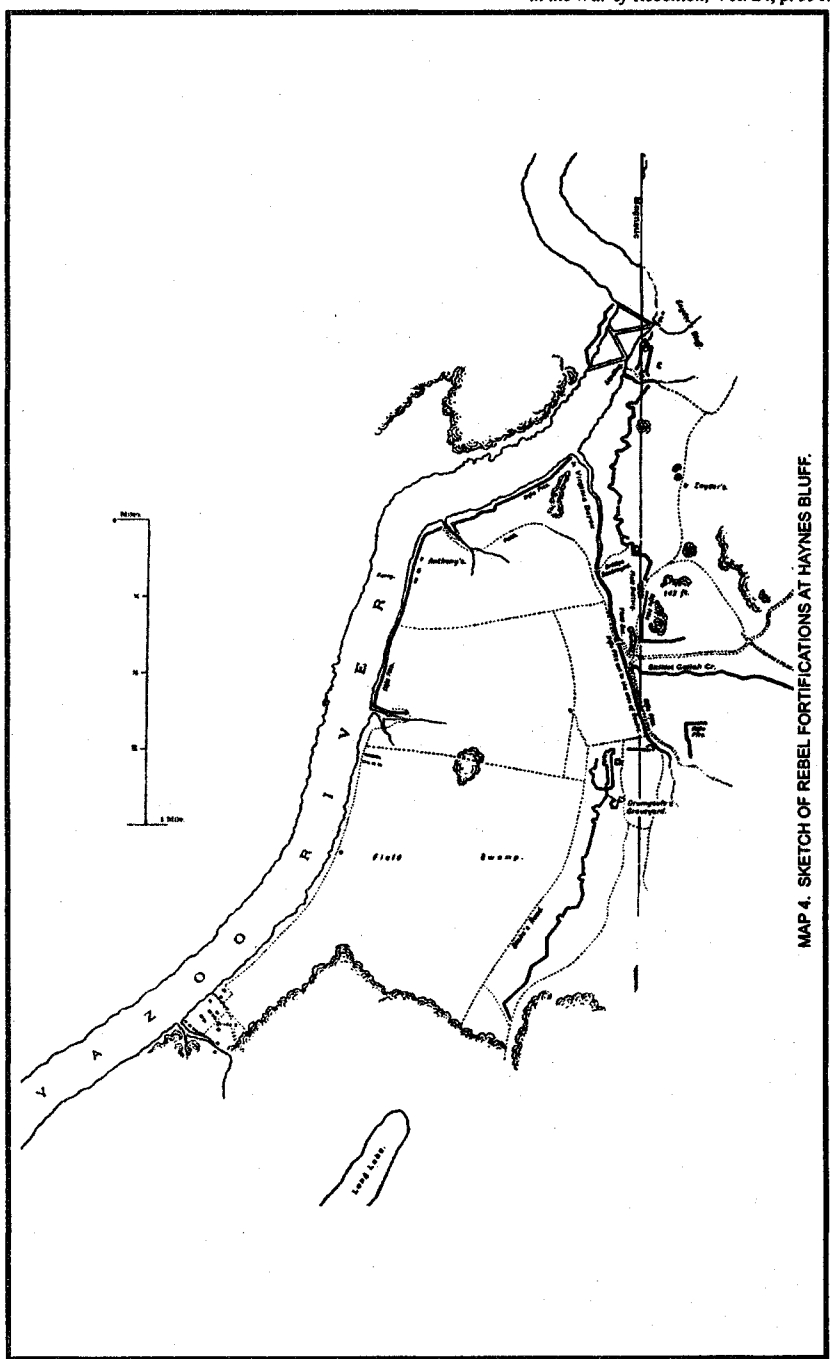
Orientation: Snyder's Bluff is one of those key places where navigable water runs along the foot of a bluff. In this case, the water happens to be the Yazoo River, which in the 1860s emptied into the Mississippi a few miles upstream from Vicksburg (about fourteen miles south and west

from here). This bluff, as well as the hills traversed while driving north from Vicksburg, are part of the Walnut Hills, a section of the north-south bluff line that marks the eastern edge of the Mississippi floodplain.

Situation 1: Confederate Defenses, December 1862-May 1863. The U.S. Navy's victory at Memphis, on 6 June 1862, exposed the Mississippi River between Memphis and Vicksburg to attack by Union gunboats since there was no defensible terrain between those two points. Also vulnerable were the tributaries, such as the Yazoo, flowing into that section of the Mississippi. Following the Union expedition to Vicksburg in the summer of 1862, the Confederates fortified this spot, which is the first high ground encountered when coming upstream on the Yazoo. Although the purpose of this fortified complex was to block Union gunboats from raiding the fertile Yazoo River valley, it also constituted an outpost of the main Vicksburg fortifications, which were located twelve miles to the south. Any river-borne Union force seeking to bypass the Vicksburg defenses by sailing up the Yazoo could be blocked here.

In December 1862, the Snyder's Bluff defensive position, which was anchored on this hill and extended approximately two miles southward, was commanded by Colonel Edward Higgins. His force consisted of nine large guns and two regiments, the 22d Louisiana and the 3d Mississippi, for a total garrison of approximately 1,300. The guns were positioned in earthworks here on the bluffs, while the infantry was sheltered in rifle pits located among the guns and down near the riverbank. The batteries at this particular spot commanded the entire stretch of river to the left as far as the next bend downstream. Union vessels coming up this stretch not only presented an easy target, but also had to sail single file and could fight back with only their bow guns. Moreover, the Confederates obstructed the channel with "torpedoes," or mines, and a floating log barricade, referred to as a "raft," that blocked the river from bank to bank immediately in front of this stand. Viewed from above, this raft was shaped like the letter "W" (see map 4).

The Confederates generally referred to this formidable defensive position as "Snyder's Mill," or "Snyder's Bluff," which is the name of the hill upon which you are now standing. The U.S. Navy referred to it as "Drumgould's Bluff," which is the next hill to the south, where the left wing of the position rested. The U.S. Army usually called the position "Haynes' Bluff," which is actually the name of the next hill to



MAP 4. SKETCH OF REBEL FORTIFICATIONS AT HAYNES BLUFF.

Map 4

the north and which was not part of the main defensive works. Nonetheless, the name "Haynes' Bluff" is the term used by most historians to designate this fortified position, which actually occupied Drumgould's and Snyder's bluffs. By any name, this piece of ground and the defensive works located here constituted some of the most important terrain in the campaign for Vicksburg.

War came to the Yazoo River in December 1862 when a Union naval force arrived to reconnoiter the river in anticipation of an eventual Army landing. Commanded by Captain Henry Walke, the force consisted of two tinclads, a ram, and two ironclads. The reconnaissance came to an abrupt halt on 12 December, approximately three miles downstream from Snyder's Bluff, when the ironclad *Cairo* struck a "torpedo" and sank. This setback meant that the Army's landings would have to take place even farther downstream, well short of the river-bluff interface.

Two weeks later, Major General William T. Sherman's troops landed at Chickasaw Bayou, approximately six miles downstream from Snyder's Bluff. To support the landings, Rear Admiral David D. Porter personally led another expedition up the Yazoo. Four ironclads (led by the huge *Benton*), two timberclads, four tinclads, and two rams cleared "torpedoes" and tried to divert attention from the Army landings. When Porter's vessels reached the bend about one mile downstream from here, they opened fire on these bluffs. The ensuing artillery duel lasted about ninety minutes, with the *Benton* bearing the brunt of the action. (Since the channel was too narrow to bring vessels abreast, the other gunboats remained downstream from the bend and lobbed their shells over the point.) Because of their elevation, the Confederate batteries delivered a plunging fire that could smash through unarmored decks, even if it could not penetrate armored casemates. The *Benton* received more than twenty hits and sustained about a dozen casualties, including her commander, Lieutenant Commander William Gwin, who was mortally wounded when a large-caliber rifled shot struck him in the chest and arm. The Confederate batteries were undamaged, and casualties amounted to only one killed and two wounded.

Three days later, when it was clear that Sherman's Chickasaw Bayou operation had failed, Sherman and Porter devised a plan for a nighttime amphibious assault against Snyder's Bluff. Under the plan, a ram fitted with a rake-like mine-clearing device would lead a force of seven ironclads, two timberclads, and two tinclads that would cover

the landing of 10,000 picked assault troops. The infantry, consisting of Brigadier General Frederick Steele's division and Colonel Giles A. Smith's brigade, was to land between Drumgould's and Snyder's Bluffs and then storm the heights. Scheduled to take place in the early morning hours of 31 December, this ambitious operation was called off due to heavy fog.

The idea of mounting a direct assault on these bluffs resurfaced three months later. By the end of March, Grant's "bayou expeditions" had come to naught, and he was casting about for some way to get a toehold on the east side of the Mississippi. On 2 April, Porter, Grant, and Sherman reconnoitered the position by boat but decided that an assault landing would incur prohibitive casualties. Nonetheless, on 30 April, Sherman returned here with ten transports, each carrying a regiment. Sherman's purpose, however, was not to assault but to divert Confederate attention from Grant's force, which was about to cross the Mississippi near Grand Gulf, forty miles to the south. Accompanying the transports was a naval force under Lieutenant Commander K. Randolph Breese that included three ironclads, a timberclad, four tinclads, and three mortar boats. Sherman's troops disembarked downstream from here and formed for an assault, while Breese's gunboats engaged the Confederate batteries. The Union forces repeated the performance on 31 April, then departed. Thus ended the last Union challenge to the Snyder's Bluff fortified position.

Teaching Points: Decisive terrain, placement of defenses, riverine operations.

Situation 2: Union Defenses. Following the Union victories at Champion Hill and Big Black River, the Confederates at Snyder's Bluff evacuated their positions and withdrew into the Vicksburg stronghold. On 18 May, the same day that the first Union troops reached the fortifications of Vicksburg, the 4th Iowa Cavalry of Sherman's corps reached the Yazoo River at Snyder's Bluff and captured thirteen heavy guns abandoned there by the Confederates. On the riverbank below, the Union troopers met the ironclad *De Kalb*. Grant and Sherman arrived in person shortly thereafter to inspect the key terrain that they had struggled so long to attain.

Union logisticians selected the W. A. Johnson plantation, located on Chickasaw Bayou several miles downstream from Snyder's Bluff, to serve as the logistics base for Grant's army during the siege of

Vicksburg. The first supplies moved through on 21 May. Thereafter, Union forces were assured of a steady flow of supply.

To protect the Johnson's Plantation depot and to guard the rear of Union forces besieging Vicksburg, Grant posted a covering force on a line running from Haynes' Bluff to the Big Black River. Union troops erected new fortifications, facing north along that line. By the end of the siege, three divisions occupied the Haynes' Bluff-Big Black River line: Brigadier General Thomas Welsh's and Brigadier General Robert B. Potter's divisions from IX Corps and Brigadier General William "Sooley" Smith's division from XVI Corps. Confederate forces never attacked this line.

Teaching Points: Logistics base, covering force.

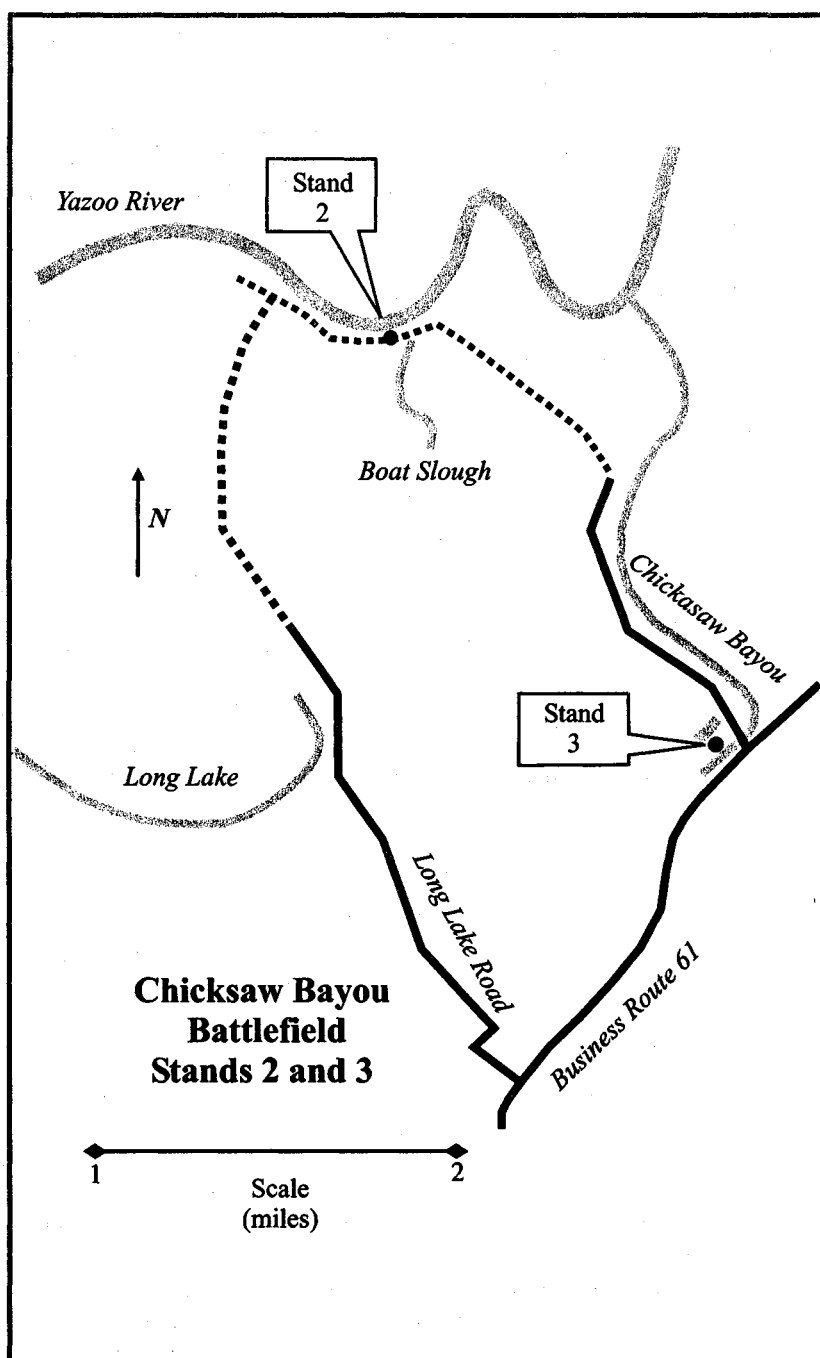
Stand 2

Boat Slough

Directions: From Snyder's Bluff, backtrack south on State Route 3, then merge with U.S. Route 61 South toward Vicksburg. Turn right on Business Route 61, which marks the approximate trace of the Confederate positions during the Chickasaw Bayou battle. Travel 4.1 miles on Business Route 61 to the first traffic light. Then, turn right at the light, in the direction of the Port of Vicksburg. After 0.6 mile, turn right on Long Lake Road. After 4.6 miles, turn right at the T intersection and travel one mile. Park near the white church (see map 5).

Orientation: The last mile on the route to this stand passes along the section of the Yazoo River bank that Sherman used to land his force on 26-27 December. In 1862, this was the only useable landing site between the mouth of the Yazoo and Haynes' Bluff. This stand is on the ground occupied by Morgan's division. The body of water beside the church is Boat Slough (pronounced "slew").

Situation: The 30,000 Union troops that Sherman landed here in December 1862 represented one arm of a Union pincer movement directed against Mississippi. Grant's force, advancing overland from Tennessee, was the other. Union strategy was predicated on the assumption that Pemberton could not counter both threats, thus either Grant or Sherman would be free to move virtually unopposed against the interior of Mississippi. Moreover, it was expected that Sherman's lodgment on the Yazoo would become Grant's logistical depot when Grant reached the Vicksburg vicinity.



Map 5

Sherman's force consisted of four divisions, three of which had been assembled in Memphis, the fourth coming from Helena, Arkansas. The Memphis divisions consisted of veteran troops jumbled together with new recruits that had been raised by Major General John C. McClernand, the political general from Illinois. In his haste to get underway before McClernand arrived in Memphis to reclaim his troops, Sherman rushed the embarkation process, which resulted in confusion and disorder. There was no attempt at combat loading; rather, men, animals, and equipment were tumbled on to any available vessel. Finally, on 20 December, forty-one transports, escorted by twelve gunboats, sailed south from Memphis. Another nineteen transports, carrying the division from Arkansas joined en route. Sherman's armada reached the mouth of the Yazoo on 26 December.

In ascending the Yazoo, Sherman intended to turn the flank of Vicksburg's main defenses, which faced the Mississippi. Sherman was compelled to find a landing site somewhere between the mouth of the Yazoo and Haynes' Bluff, where Confederate works blocked the river. His only real option was to land at the plantations that lined the riverbank near Chickasaw Bayou. Brigadier General George W. Morgan's division came ashore on the left, near Boat Slough. Brigadier General Frederick Steele's division constituted the Union center, and Brigadier General Morgan L. Smith's division the right. Brigadier General Andrew J. Smith came ashore with his division the following day. The Union landings occupied about two miles of riverbank in all.

The confusion and disorder of disembarkation were as great as the chaos of embarkation had been at Memphis. Moreover, Sherman's men were three miles away from their immediate objective—the line of bluffs that would put them on high, dry ground. Between the Yazoo and the bluffs were fields, trees, swamps, and bayous. In fact, the ground that Sherman had landed upon was virtually an island.

The Union landing force made only limited advances on the 26th. Owing to the chaos of unloading, most units bivouacked near the boats. Just a few Confederate skirmishers were on hand to harass the landing force. Major General Martin L. Smith, the Confederate commander at Vicksburg, possessed only 6,500 troops with which to counter Sherman's 30,000. However, help was on the way because Grant's advance into northern Mississippi had been turned back by the 20 December raid upon his supply lines. This allowed the Confederates to shift troops by rail from northern Mississippi to Vicksburg.

Vignette (Grant's orders to Sherman): "You will proceed with as little delay as possible to Memphis, Tenn., taking with you one division of your present command. On your arrival at Memphis you will assume command of all the troops there, and that portion of General Curtis' forces at present east of the Mississippi River, and organize them into brigades and divisions in your own way. As soon as possible move with them down the river to the vicinity of Vicksburg, and with the co-operation of the gunboat fleet under command of [Rear Admiral] Porter proceed to the reduction of that place, in such manner as circumstances [and] your own judgement may dictate." (Grant to Sherman, 8 December 1862, in *O.R.*, vol. 17, pt. 1, 601.)

Teaching Points: Consequences of inadequate planning, logistics preparation of the battlefield.

Stand 3 Chickasaw Bayou

Directions: Continue along the gravel road that approximates the route of Morgan's division toward Chickasaw Bayou. Travel 3.3 miles to a point short of Business Route 61 where two small bodies of water lie to the right of the road. The easternmost body (a brush-filled depression in dry weather) is what is left of Chickasaw Bayou (see map 5 on page 89).

Orientation: Chickasaw Bayou flowed northeast along the foot of the bluffs, then curved left (west) to empty into the Yazoo. In 1863, the road traveled by Morgan's division crossed Chickasaw bayou on a bridge approximately one hundred yards downstream (northeast) of this stand. De Courcy's attack came in the vicinity of that bridge. Thayer's attack occurred near the site of this stand.

The Confederate main line of resistance in this particular area was located several hundred yards beyond the bayou, on the slopes leading up to the bluffs.

Situation: The Union advance inland from the Yazoo landing sites was impeded by the terrain as much as by Confederate action. It took two days, 27 and 28 December, for Sherman's entire force to close on the enemy's main line of resistance. Swamps and woods constrained the Union troops to a few restricted avenues of approach. Artillery had poor fields of fire, and the gunboats back on the Yazoo were of little help. In an effort to broaden the advance, Sherman shifted Steele's division farther upstream to Blake's Levee on 27 December but

recalled it on 28 December when the route proved to be constricted and stoutly defended.

The Confederates capitalized on the abundance of natural obstacles to conduct a masterful delaying action. While a handful of regiments held back Sherman, Martin L. Smith and his subordinate on the scene at Chickasaw Bayou, Brigadier General Stephen D. Lee, assembled an ad hoc force that numbered about 15,000 by 29 December. These troops prepared a defensive position at the base of the bluffs, placing Chickasaw Bayou between themselves and the advancing Union forces. They dug rifle pits, chopped down trees to form abatis, and cleared fields of fire at the few places where Chickasaw Bayou could readily be crossed. The defenders enjoyed excellent lateral communications along the road that paralleled their works. Thus, the Confederates were well-established in their defenses by 29 December when Sherman's men were finally in position to launch a concerted attack. Three days had elapsed since the Union force landed on the banks of the Yazoo.

Sherman's plan for the 29 December attack designated Morgan's division as the main effort. Morgan was to cross Chickasaw Bayou in the vicinity of a corduroy bridge, then storm the heights beyond. His attack would come up against Lee's Confederate brigade. To Morgan's left, Brigadier General Frank P. Blair's brigade of Steele's division was to make a supporting attack. Off to the right, the divisions of Morgan L. Smith and A.J. Smith likewise were to pin down the defenders in their front (Brigadier General Seth M. Barton's brigade).

Things began to go wrong even before the attack started. Engineers who were supposed to emplace a pontoon bridge across Chickasaw Bayou under cover of darkness discovered that certain components had been left behind in Memphis. Then, they mistakenly inserted the bridge on the wrong stream. It was daylight before work began at the proper site, by which time Confederate marksmen were able to prevent completion of the bridge. Without this bridge, two of Morgan's three brigades would be unable to participate in the assault.

Thus, when the time came to attack, Morgan led off with just one reinforced brigade, commanded by Colonel John F. DeCourcy. DeCourcy's men succeeded in crossing the bayou and entering the Confederate positions, but obstacles disrupted their assault, and Confederate fire finally stopped it. Brigadier General John M. Thayer's brigade of Steele's division attempted to attack in support of

De Courcy, but due to a mix-up, only one regiment reached the far bank of the bayou. A Confederate counterattack drove DeCourcy back in confusion.

To the left, Blair's supporting attack fared no better. His brigade found itself struggling through obstacles and raked by enfilading fire from both flanks. Blair's men retreated across the same bridge that DeCourcy used in his attack.

To the right, just one brigade became decisively engaged. Elements of Colonel Giles A. Smith's brigade succeeded in crossing the bayou at the Indian Mound but were immediately pinned down under the shelter of the far bank. Some of the survivors did not escape until nightfall; others were captured.

Unwilling to force another frontal assault at Chickasaw Bayou, Sherman and Porter laid plans for an Army-Navy night assault farther upstream, at the foot of Snyder's Bluff. Heavy fog on the morning of 31 December forced Sherman to call off the operation. On 2 January, Sherman gave up the campaign. His forces evacuated the Chickasaw Bayou landing and sailed back down the Yazoo.

The Chickasaw Bayou battle cost the Union 208 killed, 1,005 wounded, and 563 missing. Confederate casualties totaled fifty-seven killed, 120 wounded, and ten missing.

Vignette 1 (DeCourcy's 29 December attack across Chickasaw Bayou): "At ten minutes before 12 o'clock the order to advance was given and the Twenty-second and Forty-second Regiments found themselves immediately engaged under a hot fire in the toils of a nearly impassable abatis of heavy timber . . . By this time the Sixteenth Ohio, Fifty-fourth Indiana, and a part of the Twenty-second Kentucky, having a much easier and less encumbered ground to march over, had dashed across the bayou on their front, and by a road had marched up to and deployed on the open ground which sloped up to the works which they were to attack. This attack they began immediately, in splendid style, and nearly accomplished their object, notwithstanding the immense and fearfully-destructive fire which poured in from front, left, right, and even rear, for as soon as these regiments had advanced a few hundred yards toward the works the enemy opened with a battery in rear of the left of their advance... [T]he brave men composing these [regiments] had nearly crossed the large and open space of more than half a mile which lay stretched out before them glacia fashion, when the enemy increased his fire of small-arms and grape to such a degree

as to render a farther advance impossible.” (Report of Col. John F. De Courcy, 29 December 1862, in *O.R.*, vol. 17, pt. 1, 649-50.)

Vignette 2 (Thayer’s brigade in support of De Courcy): “By the advice of General Morgan I dismounted and directed all officers mounted to do the same, as we would be sure to draw the fire of the enemy’s sharpshooters if mounted. The Fourth Iowa, Col. J. A. Williamson, was on the right. I took my place at the head of the column and moved forward by the right flank. We crossed the bayou and went over the enemy’s outside works. I then directed Colonel Williamson to deploy his regiment to the right and extend them as skirmishers. We were still advancing in front of the enemy’s rifle-pits and batteries and crossed over a high rail fence. On seeing the ground I at once formed my plan to move up the hill, when, looking back for my other regiments, to my amazement none were to be seen and none coming, for I could see back to the point from which I had started. I could not account for it. I had supposed that five regiments were following me. I found myself within the enemy’s works with but one regiment.

“ . . . I observed [de Courcy’s brigade], which had entered the works away to my left, retiring, which of course added to our extreme peril. The Fourth Iowa was then drawing the concentrated fire of all the enemy’s batteries and rifle-pits . . . It was nothing but slaughter for it to remain. During the half-hour it was there 7 men were killed and 104 wounded [out of 480 engaged].” (Report of Brig. Gen. John M. Thayer, 31 December 1862, in *O.R.*, vol. 17, pt. 1, 658-59.)

Vignette 3 (Confederate perspective): “At daylight on the 29th the attack commenced with renewed fury and soon the appearance of a largely-increased force in front indicated an intention to assault, which was attempted almost simultaneously along the whole line. In front of General Lee the attack was the most formidable, as owing to the ground, they could deploy on a greater front, thus taking advantage of their superiority of numbers. The assaulting force—estimated at 6,000—moved from their concealed position in the woods, advanced rapidly on an open space of say 400 yards, and made a determined attack upon his entrenched position. Taken in flank by the artillery and met in front by a withering sheet of musketry fire, the enemy struggled up to within a short distance of our line, when he wavered, stopped, and soon fled in irretrievable panic and confusion, strewing the ground with his dead and wounded, leaving in our possession 4 regimental colors, over 300 prisoners, and 500 stands of arms.” (Report of Maj. Gen. Martin L. Smith, [?] January 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 17, pt. 1, 671-74.)

Teaching Points: Use of terrain in defense, problems of attack in constricting terrain.

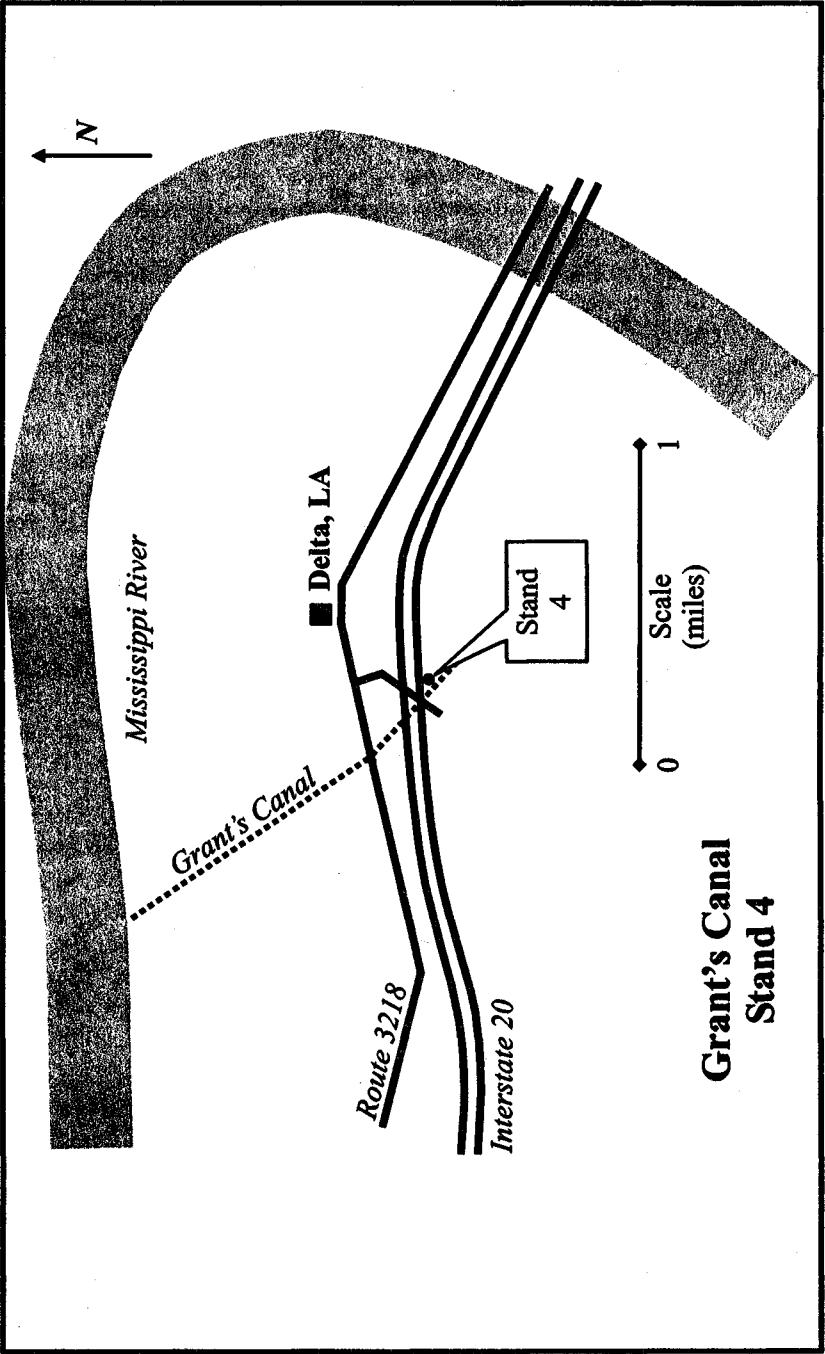
Stand 4 **Grant's Canal**

Directions: Continue along the road to Business Route 61 and turn right. Follow Route 61 through downtown Vicksburg, where it becomes Washington Street. South of town, take Interstate 20 West across the Mississippi into Louisiana. Take Exit 186, turn right, and then right again on the old highway, Louisiana Route 3218. After two miles, turn right and cross the railroad tracks. Bear right and go under the interstate overpass. Historical markers on the left side of the road mark the site of Grant's Canal (see map 6 on page 96).

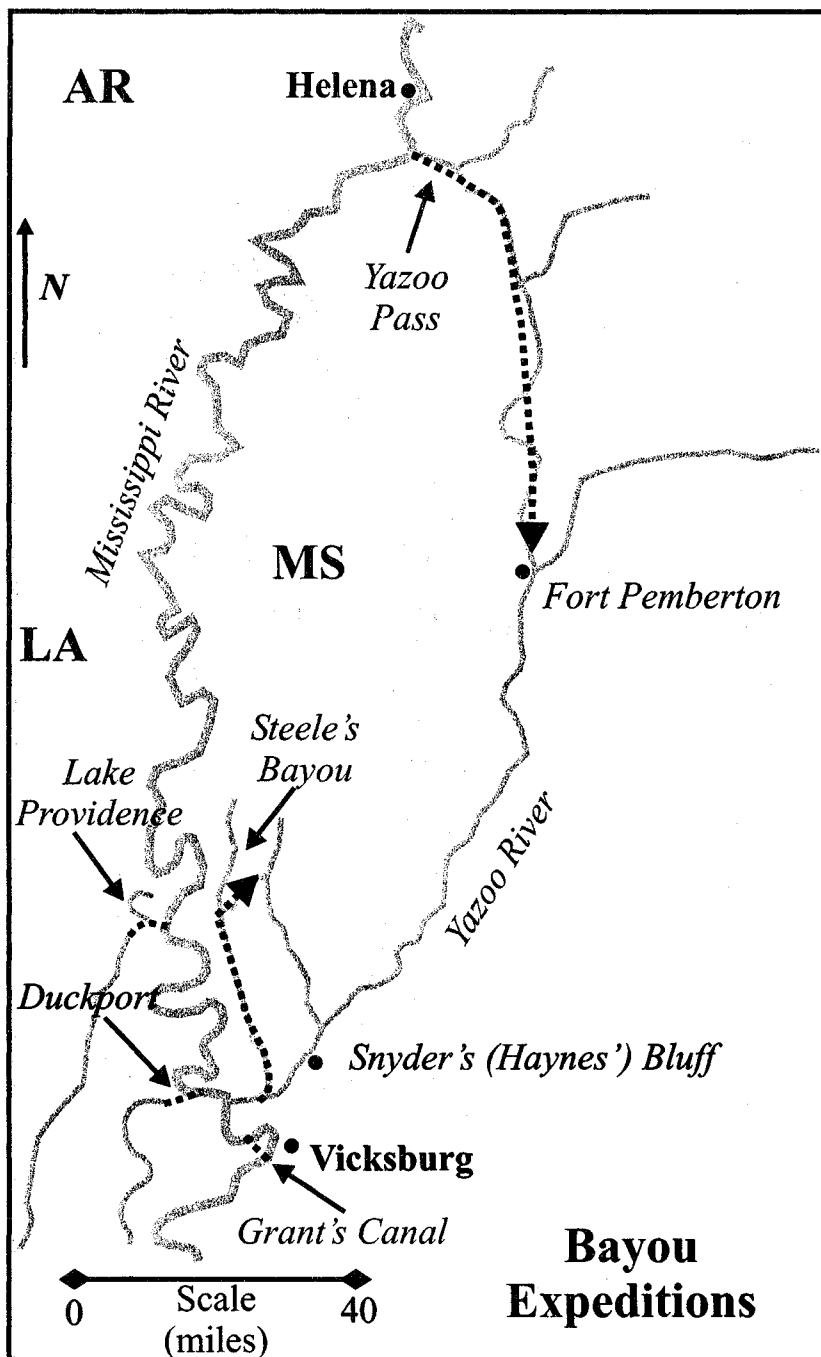
Orientation: This stand is near the southern (downstream) end of the canal. In 1863, the river channel was several hundred yards nearer to this spot than it is today.

Situation 1: Weather and the River. In January 1863, Grant reorganized his army and moved it to camps at Milliken's Bend and Young's Point on the Mississippi. His objective was to reach the high ground east of the Mississippi floodplain. The greatest obstacle to his continuation of operations against Vicksburg was high water. Although conditions had been a little drier than normal during Sherman's Chickasaw Bayou operations, the deluge came in January. By 20 January, the swamps on the floodplain were full, and still the rains fell. The river rose higher and higher through mid-March. By then, virtually the only dry ground on the floodplain was the top of the river's natural levees. Not until April did the floodwaters abate. By mid-April, the river stages were dropping precipitately until normal levels were at last attained. While it lasted, the flood placed serious constraints upon military operations and adversely affected the health and morale of the Union troops.

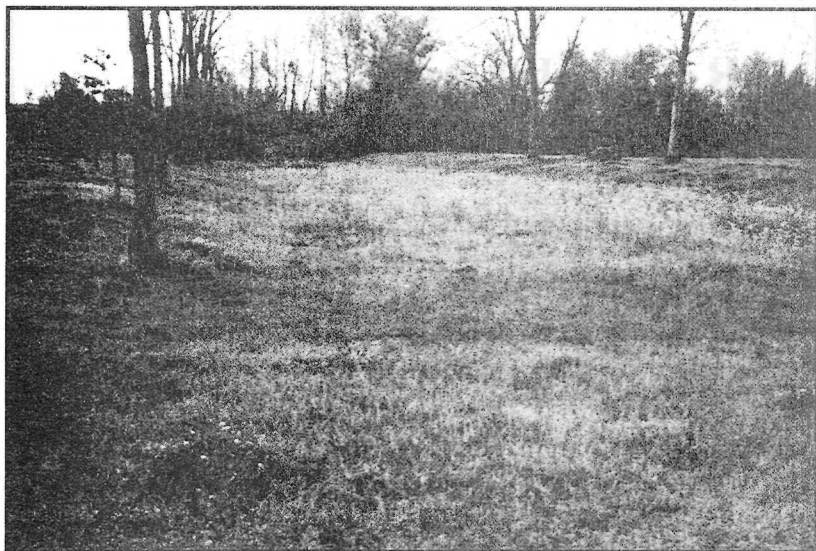
Situation 2: Grant's Canal (see map 7 on page 97). Grant's first attempt to find a water route bypassing the defenses of Vicksburg involved digging a canal across De Soto peninsula, in the expectation that the river would scour the canal into a new channel. Union troops had begun work on such a canal during Farragut's 1862 expedition to Vicksburg. Grant resumed the enterprise in late January 1863, utilizing troops from Sherman's corps, runaway slaves, and, eventually, several dipper dredges (floating steam shovels). Plans called for a canal sixty



Map 6



Map 7.



Grant's Canal as it appears today.

feet wide, six feet deep, and about one mile long. Ironically, high waters hindered the digging and made living conditions miserable for the men. Meanwhile, the Confederates erected batteries that commanded the length of the canal and eventually drove out the dredges. Work on the canal essentially stopped on 24 March. When the river level receded in April, the canal drained out. By 4 May, it was dry.

Situation 3: Lake Providence. Grant had allowed work on the canal to go on even after he shifted his attention to other enterprises. About 3 February, Union troops cut a short canal from the Mississippi to Lake Providence, an oxbow lake more than forty miles upstream from Vicksburg that was once part of the Mississippi. Lake Providence emptied into a watery maze of bayous and rivers that eventually joined the Red River and ultimately the Mississippi, far south of Vicksburg. Troops from Major General James B. McPherson's corps labored to clear obstacles on what Grant at first considered to be the "most practicable route for turning Vicksburg." By mid-March, however, it was clear that the Lake Providence route was unlikely to succeed. Meanwhile, Grant had already initiated yet another experiment.

Situation 4: Yazoo Pass. On 3 February, Union engineers blasted a hole in the levee that separated the Mississippi from the headwaters of

the Yazoo River, approximately ten miles below Helena, Arkansas. A major expedition, consisting of two ironclads, six tinclads, two rams, a mortar boat, and thirteen transports carrying Brigadier General Leonard F. Ross's division, sailed through the gap on 24 February. Grant's plan, ultimately, was to place an entire corps on the east bank of the Yazoo River upstream from Haynes' Bluff as part of a coordinated attack involving the entire army. But as the flotilla crept downstream on the Yazoo's tributaries, Confederate Major General William W. Loring established a defensive position, named Fort Pemberton, to block the Union advance. Union gunboats engaged the fort on 11, 13, and 16 March but failed to silence the Confederate guns. Although Union forces lingered in the area until early April, they made no further attempts against Fort Pemberton.

Situation 5: Steele's Bayou. Meanwhile, Rear Admiral Porter found another route to the upper Yazoo through the tangled waterways of the Delta. On 14 March, with Porter in command, five ironclads and one ram started up Steele's Bayou on a circuitous route that would bring them back to the Yazoo upstream of Haynes' Bluff. Brigadier General David Stuart's division of Sherman's corps followed the flotilla to secure its communications and to establish a bridgehead on the east bank of the Yazoo from which operations could be mounted against Haynes' Bluff. But Porter's expedition never reached the Yazoo, owing to Confederate obstructions and sniper fire. In fact, Porter required assistance from Sherman's infantry to extricate his vessels from a potential trap.

With the failure of this last expedition, Grant faced the prospect of having to attempt another assault at Chickasaw Bayou. He conducted a reconnaissance by boat on 1 April and concluded that such an assault would meet the same fate as had Sherman's operation the preceding December. "This, then, closes out the last hope of turning the enemy by the right," Grant wrote to Porter.

Vignette 1 (Advice to Grant from the General in Chief): "Direct your attention particularly to the canal proposed across the point. The President attaches much importance to this." (Halleck to Grant, 25 January 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 1, 10.)

Vignette 2 (Sherman's opinion of the various experiments): "Our canal here don't amount to much. It is full of water, but manifests no disposition to change the channel. It is a very small affair, and we can hardly work a barge through it for stumps. Even if it succeeds,

Warrenton Bluff lies below, next Grand Gulf, next Rodney, and so on . . . But Grant is on two other projects: to turn some of the waters of the Mississippi through Old Yazoo Pass into the Yazoo, above the forts at Haynes' Bluff, so that our gunboats may reach the Yazoo fleet above Yazoo City; and to turn the main river into Lake Providence, when its waters would follow the Tensas to the Black River, then the Red and Atchafalaya, thus actually reaching the sea without approaching any bluff or ground easy of defense. This is a magnificent scheme, and, if successful, will be a grand achievement. A glance at the map will show it at least probable." (Sherman to Curtis, 7 February 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 3, 37-38.)

Vignette 3 (Grant expresses disappointment over the failure of the bayou expeditions): "I regret that the chances look so gloomy for getting through to the Yazoo by that route [Steele's Bayou]. I had made so much calculation upon the expedition down Yazoo Pass, and now again by the route proposed by Admiral Porter, that I have really made but little calculation upon reaching Vicksburg by any other than Haynes' Bluff." (Grant to Sherman, 22 March 1863, in *O.R. Navies*, vol. 24, 489.)

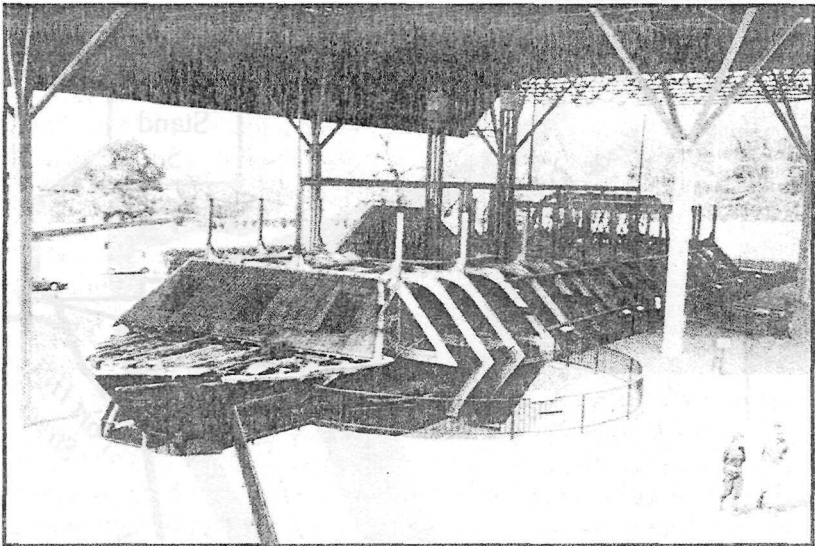
Teaching Points: Effect of weather on terrain, mobility operations, joint operations, innovation and perseverance in operational planning.

Stand 5

U.S.S. *Cairo*

Directions: Retrace your route to Interstate 20 East, and recross the Mississippi to Vicksburg. Take Exit 1C and turn left on Hall's Ferry Road. Hall's Ferry Road joins with Cherry Street, which in turn becomes Fort Hill Street on the north side of town. After passing the park entry station, turn left to the *Cairo* museum (see map 8 on page 102).

Situation: The U.S.S. *Cairo* is the only surviving example of the gunboats designed specifically for combat upon the western rivers. She was much broader for her length than an ocean-going vessel would be and much shallower in draft. Her odd assortment of guns represent the ordnance that happened to be available in the western theater when she was completed in early 1862. Although an imposing instrument of war, the *Cairo* was almost too "hi-tech" for the western theater in that she burned coal (nearly one ton per hour), which was not available locally.



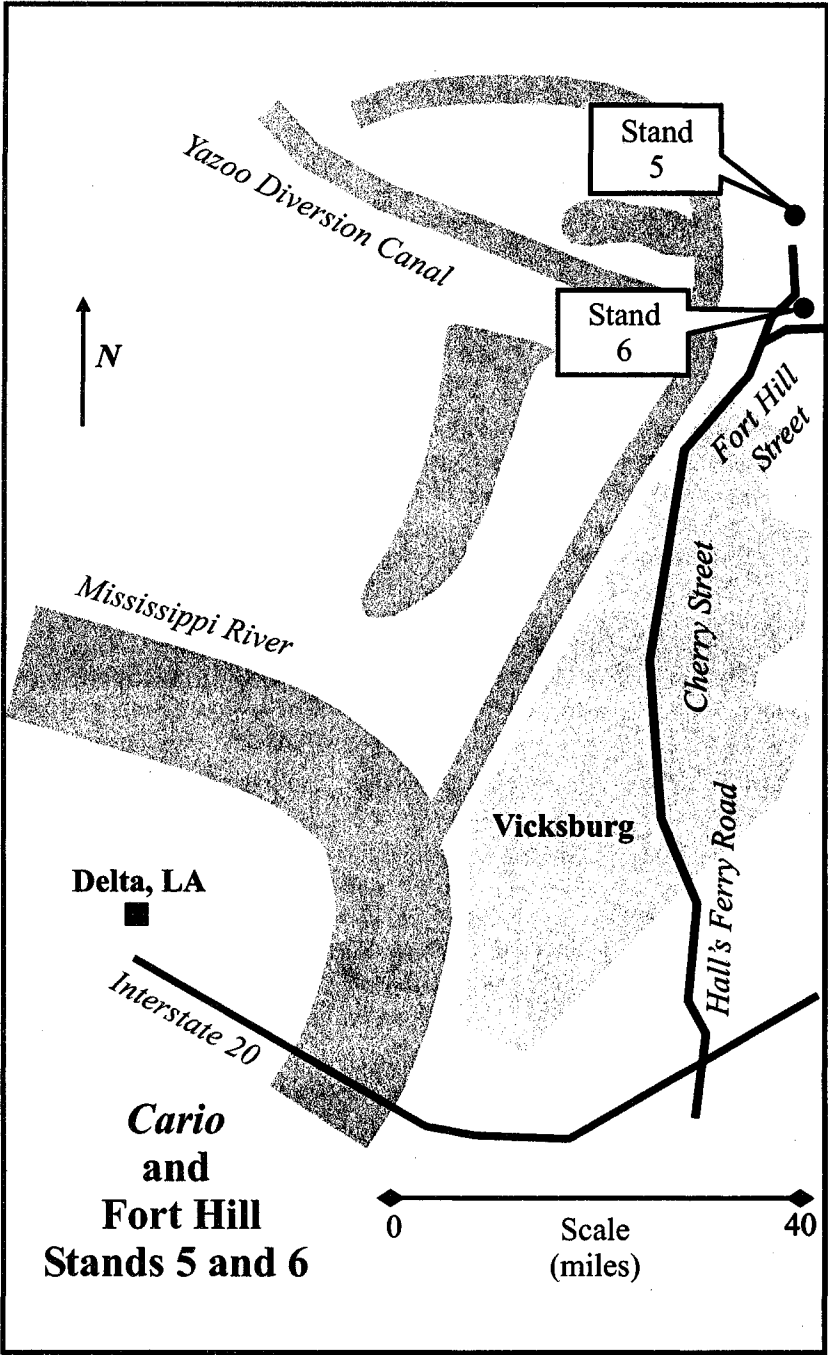
The U.S.S. *Cairo*

In addition to her military functions, the *Cairo* served as a rather uncomfortable home for 175 officers and men. The relics and exhibits inside the *Cairo* museum help to remind us not only of the military technology but also the human dimension of the war on the rivers.

Vignette (The sinking of the Cairo, 12 December 1862, as recounted by her captain): "In the meanwhile, the head of the *Cairo* having got in toward the shore, I backed out to straighten upstream, and ordered *Marmora* to go ahead slow. I had made but half a dozen revolutions of the wheel and had gone ahead perhaps half a length, the *Marmora* a little ahead, leading, when two sudden explosions in quick succession occurred, one close to my port quarter, the other apparently under my port bow, the latter so severe as to raise the guns under it some distance from the deck.

"She commenced to fill so rapidly that in two or three minutes the water was over her forecastle. I shoved her immediately for the bank, but a few yards distant, got out a hawser to a tree, hoping to keep her from sliding off into deep water. The pumps, steam and hand, were immediately manned and everything done that could be.

"Her whole frame was so completely shattered that I found immediately that nothing more could be effected than to move the sick and the arms. I ordered the *Queen of the West* alongside and passed



Map 8

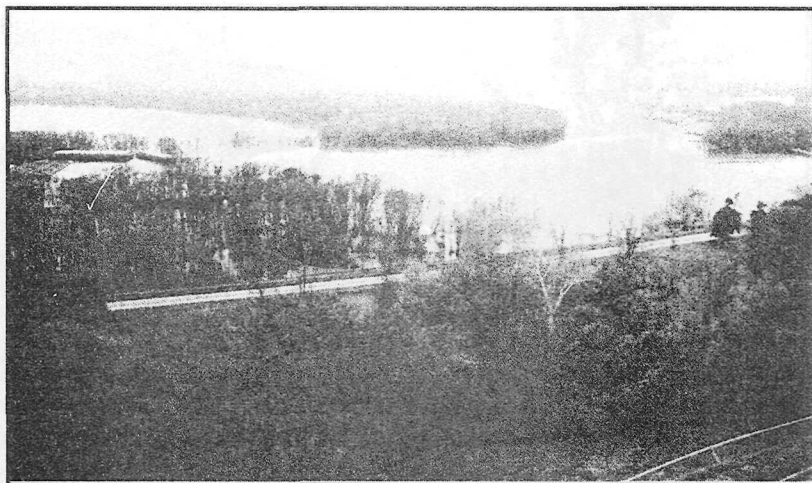
what articles I could get at into her, with a portion of the crew, the remainder taking to our boats. The *Cairo* sunk in about twelve minutes after the explosion, going totally out of sight, except the top of her chimneys, in 6 fathoms of water. I am happy to say that, though some half a dozen men were injured, no lives were lost." (Report of Lieutenant Commander Thomas O. Selfridge, 13 December 1862, in *O.R. Navies*, vol. 23, 548-550.)

Teaching Points: Naval technology in 1863, Navy as a combat multiplier.

Stand 6 Fort Hill

Directions: Exit the *Cairo* museum area, and turn left at the gatehouse. Ascend the hill to the first parking area (stop 9 on the battlefield tour route) (see map 8).

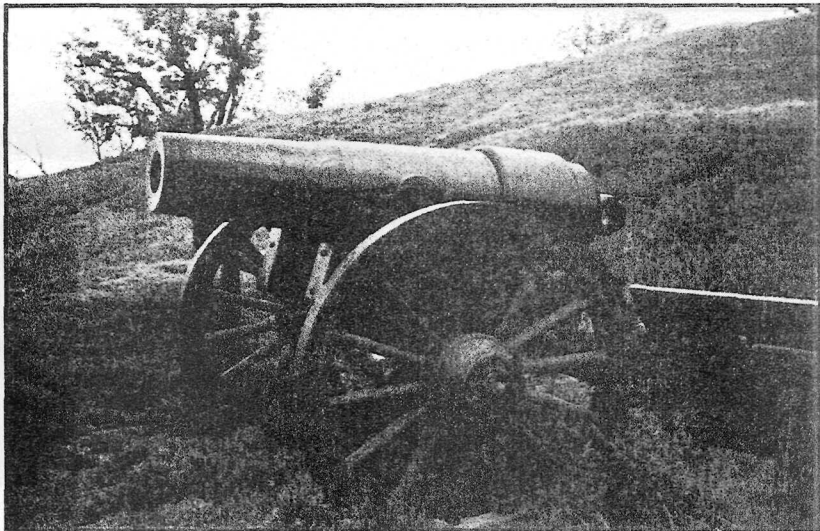
Orientation: Fort Hill anchored the northwest corner of the Vicksburg defenses. Landward defenses follow the ridge that runs east from this stand. The river batteries extend south from this location. The waterway at the base of the bluff today is not the Mississippi River; it is the outflow of the Yazoo Diversionary Canal, which occupies part of the old Mississippi riverbed. The crescent-shaped Vicksburg harbor area to the northwest approximates the river's hairpin bend around De Soto Point, as it would have appeared in 1863.



The view from Fort Hill during high water. The curving waterway in the upper right is the remnant of the hairpin bend in the Mississippi (1997).

The mounted artillery pieces visible near the highway at the foot of Fort Hill indicate the site of Water Battery.

Situation 1: River Batteries. The Confederate river defenses at Vicksburg, commanded by Colonel Edward Higgins, consisted of thirty-seven large-caliber antiship guns, plus thirteen field artillery pieces, distributed in thirteen batteries covering three miles of waterfront. Three of these batteries, Marine Hospital Battery, Wyman's Hill Battery, and Water Battery, were particularly significant. All three stood thirty to forty feet above river level, which gave them the benefits of some plunging fire, without the drawbacks of depressing the gun muzzles too far. (The projectiles of muzzleloading artillery pieces had a tendency to shift forward, or "start," when the muzzle was depressed, with adverse effects on ballistics.) The guns of these three batteries were also close to the river, which simplified aiming and ensured high projectile velocity at the target. Marine Hospital Battery, located south of downtown Vicksburg, contained three 42-pounder smoothbores, two 32-pounder smoothbores, and two 32-pounder rifles. Wyman's Hill Battery, located on the northern outskirts of Vicksburg, held three 10-inch Columbiads, one 8-inch Columbiad, one 32-pounder rifle, one 2.71-inch Whitworth rifle, and one 3-inch Armstrong rifle. The most important of these batteries was Water Battery. Water Battery commanded the hairpin turn in the river, where vessels had enough trouble navigating without the added burden of combating



The "Widow Blakely," one of Vicksburg's river defense guns.

Confederate firepower. In April 1863, Water Battery mounted three 32-pounder rifles, one 32-pounder smoothbore, and one 10-inch Columbiad.

The high velocity of the Mississippi at Vicksburg was both good and bad for the Confederate defenders. The river ran too fast for them to emplace barrier rafts or torpedoes, as they had done on the Yazoo. On the other hand, the current made it extremely dangerous for Union vessels to attempt an upstream passage of the Vicksburg position. Racing downstream, a Union vessel might get through the danger zone in front of the batteries in as little as twenty minutes. Clawing her way upstream, the same vessel would be under fire for ninety minutes. In effect, Union boats running downriver past Vicksburg were making a one-way trip so long as the river batteries remained in Confederate hands.

Teaching Points: Terrain analysis, placement of defenses.

Situation 2: Running the Batteries. On the night of 16-17 April, Rear Admiral Porter led a portion of his squadron downriver in a dash past the Vicksburg batteries. In the lead were six ironclads: the *Benton*, which bore Porter's flag and which had the tug *Ivy* lashed to its starboard side; *Lafayette*, with the ram *General Price* lashed alongside; *Louisville*; *Mound City*; *Pittsburg*; and *Carondelet*. Next came three transports, the *Silver Wave*, *Henry Clay*, and *Forest Queen*. Bringing up the rear was the misbegotten ironclad *Tuscumbia*. All the vessels had one or more barges lashed alongside, which carried coal for the ironclads and supplies for Grant's army. One barge loaded with ammunition floated downstream by itself.

Porter's flotilla left its anchorage at the mouth of the Yazoo at 2115. As the vessels neared Vicksburg, their captains reduced steam so as to avoid alerting the Confederates with the sound of churning pistons. At 2310, *Benton* drifted around the hairpin bend and received a spattering of musket fire from sentinels along the shore. It took another six minutes for the Confederate artillery to open. *Benton* ran close in to the Mississippi shore and, at 2323, began blasting away with her guns in the general direction of the Confederate batteries.

For the next two hours, the Vicksburg waterfront was transformed into a surreal scene. One after the other, Union vessels swept around the treacherous bend. Ironclads and shore batteries filled the air with shot and shell as the Union boats groped their way downstream. Dazzled by the light of fires set by the Confederates to illuminate the

river, confused by smoke, and buffeted by eddies, several pilots lost control of their vessels, some of which spun completely around before facing downstream again. Collisions occurred as the formation fell apart. One of the transports, *Silver Wave*, sought safety in speed. She left her place in line and raced ahead among the ironclads, ultimately to emerge unscathed from the gauntlet. The other two transports, *Henry Clay* and *Forest Queen*, apparently sought safety in retreat. In any event, their bows were pointed upstream when *Tuscumbia*, bringing up the rear, herded them back downriver. *Tuscumbia* took *Forest Queen* under tow when a Confederate shot severed the transport's steam line. *Henry Clay* was not so fortunate. Disabled and set afire by Confederate shells, she was abandoned by her crew and burned to the waterline.

By 0200, the Confederate guns had fallen silent, and in the predawn hours, Union vessels straggled in to the rendezvous point at New Carthage, some twenty-five miles below Vicksburg. Although every vessel had sustained hits, the only losses were *Henry Clay* and one coal barge. Incredibly, personnel losses totaled twelve wounded and no fatalities.

Back in Vicksburg, there was consternation over the poor showing of the river batteries. On the average, each gun had fired only seven rounds during the entire engagement. The gunners did better on 22 April, when six unarmed and unarmored Union transports, manned largely by Army volunteers, ran the Vicksburg batteries. This time, the Confederates were fully alert. Moreover, there was no return fire to interfere with their gunnery. Each gun fired an average of fourteen rounds on this occasion, sinking one transport and six of the twelve barges.

The presence of Union ironclads below Vicksburg did little to clarify the strategic picture for Pemberton, who remained at his headquarters in Jackson. There were still Union ironclads and troops above Vicksburg, which meant that he could not rule out the possibility of a direct attack on Vicksburg. Moreover, with Union troops, transports, and ironclads below Vicksburg, the entire eastern riverbank from Vicksburg to Port Hudson was vulnerable to assault.

Vignette 1 (excerpt from the log of the gunboat Benton, 16 April): "At 8:45 P.M. the admiral and staff came on board. 9 o'clock hoisted signals for fleet to get underway [from anchorage at the mouth of the Yazoo]. 9:15 got underway, with the tug *Ivy* lashed to the starboard quarter, and steamed down slowly toward Vicksburg, the other vessels

taking their places in line astern of us. 9:50 stopped the engines and drifted slowly down, waiting for the other boats . . . 10:30 started ahead very slowly, the lights of Vicksburg plainly in sight. 11 o'clock rounded the point. 11:10 the enemy's musketry opened upon us; they also beat the long roll [summoning troops to their posts]. [11:16] the enemy's batteries opened upon us, slowly at first, but afterwards quite rapidly. 11:23 opened fire on batteries and town with forward and port batteries and went ahead at full speed. The rebels built fires to light up the batteries, which showed our vessels very plainly. The enemy now firing very rapidly. 12:29 arrived opposite Biggs plantation (below the canal). General Sherman and Mr. Bridgman came on board, conversed, and went on shore. 1:15 passed Warrenton; not a shot fired at us . . . Eighty-one shot fired from this vessel, viz, three IX-inch shrapnel, five-second [fuse]; eighteen IX-inch shell, five-second; sixteen 42-pounder shell, five-second; twenty-one 32-pounder shell, five-second; twenty-three 32-pounder stand grape . . . Were struck six times; but one shot passing through casemate. Casualties, 5 wounded . . . (Abstract log of the *Benton*, in *O.R. Navies*, vol. 24, 681-85.)

Vignette 2 (from Charles A. Dana's report to the Secretary of War): “. . . for an hour and a half the cannonade was terrific, raging incessantly along the line of about 4 miles in extent. I counted five hundred and twenty-five discharges . . .” (Dana to Stanton, 17 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 1, 76.)

Vignette 3 (Pemberton's reaction to news of Porter running the batteries): “I regard the navigation of the Mississippi River shut out from us now. No more supplies can be gotten from the Trans-Mississippi Department.” (Pemberton to Chalmers, 18 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 1, 313.)

Teaching Points: Joint planning and risk assessment, defense plan, engagement area.

DAY 2

Stand 7

Grand Gulf: Fort Cobun

Directions: To reach Grand Gulf from Vicksburg, take Interstate 20 to Exit 1B. Travel south twenty-two miles on US Route 61. Turn right at the sign for Grand Gulf State Park, and drive approximately 8.1 miles, past the park headquarters, and through what is left of Grand Gulf (bear

left at the ruins of the old schoolhouse), until the road ends in a cul-de-sac (see map 9).

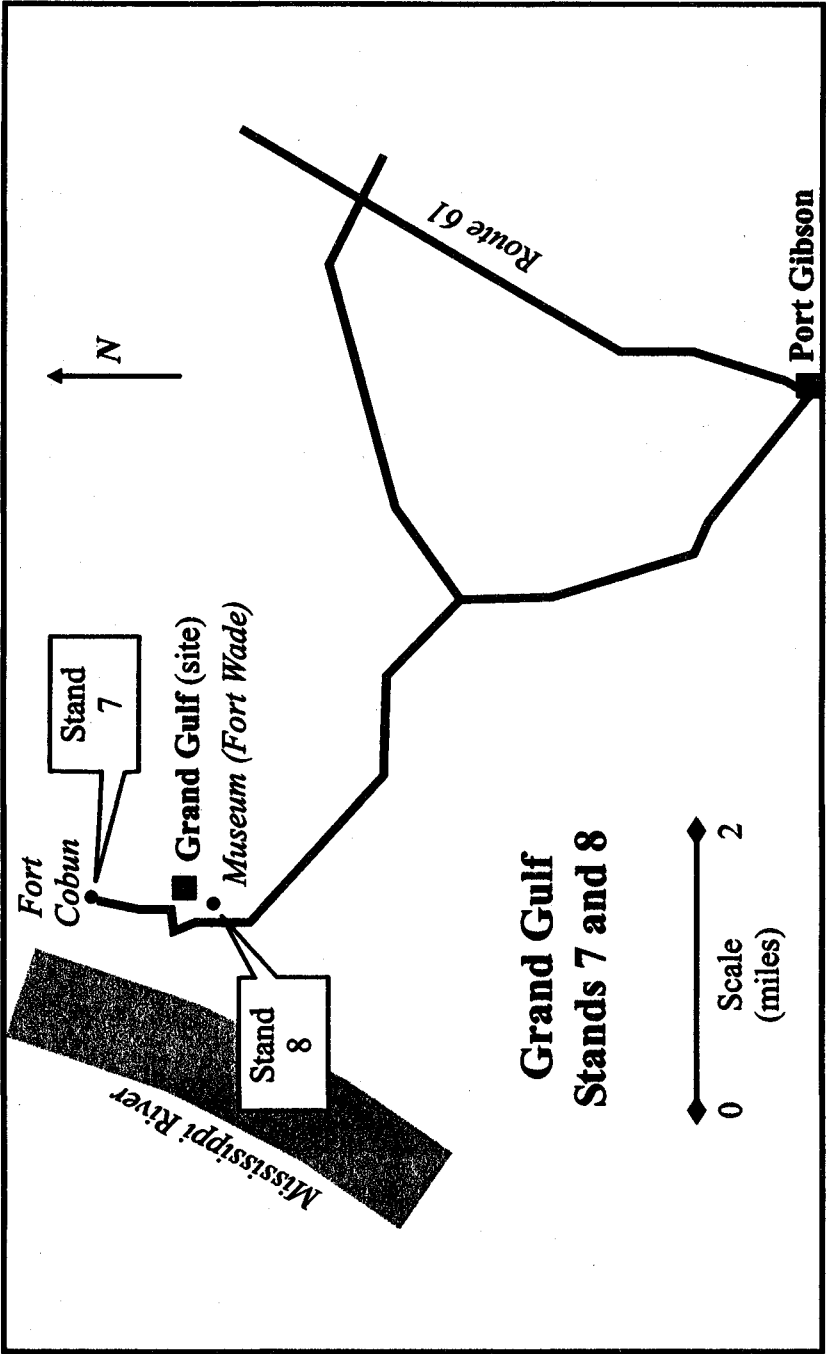
Orientation: This is the site of Fort Cobun. In 1863, the Mississippi River flowed in from the west to the foot of this bluff, where it made a bend to the south. This is the first place south of Vicksburg where the river met the bluffs. The Big Black River emptied into the Mississippi just a few hundred yards north of this spot.

Situation 1: The March Down-River. On 29 March, Grant ordered McClelland to move his corps from Milliken's Bend to New Carthage, which is south of Vicksburg on the Louisiana side of the Mississippi River. When Grant issued this order, he had not yet given up all hopes of outflanking Vicksburg from the north. Union elements of the Yazoo Pass expedition still lingered near Fort Pemberton. Grant still toyed with the idea of assaulting again at Chickasaw Bayou. However, with the floodwaters receding at last, maneuver on land became a possibility once more. On 31 March, Brigadier General Peter J. Osterhaus led his division from Milliken's Bend to Richmond, Louisiana, the first leg of a march that would outflank Vicksburg from the south. The remainder of McClelland's corps followed.

Largely, the terrain of the Mississippi floodplain dictated the Union army's route of march. Much of the route to New Carthage followed the levees along Roundaway Bayou, which was once the main channel of the Mississippi. Although the route required extensive improvement, at least the levees were above the still-inundated swamps.

On the same day that Osterhaus moved out from Milliken's Bend, engineers began work on yet another experiment to open a navigable water route around Vicksburg. Near Grant's headquarters at Young's Point, work began on the Duckport Canal, which was intended to link Roundaway Bayou to the Mississippi. This would open a water route to New Carthage that could supplement the march route along the levees. Ironically, this was one experiment that would have worked - were it not for the falling river levels, which eventually left the canal high and dry.

By 17 April, McClelland's corps had reached the vicinity of the Smith plantation, called Pointe Clear, just north of New Carthage. Porter's flotilla had run the Vicksburg batteries the night before and was gathered in the river near New Carthage. On 18 May, Grant ordered McPherson to follow McClelland's route. With both his



Map 9

troops and river transport below Vicksburg, Grant had, for all practical purposes, outflanked the “Gibraltar of the West.”

In Pemberton’s headquarters at Jackson, these developments received little attention, despite the fact that Confederate troops operating out of Grand Gulf skirmished repeatedly with McClernand’s advance elements and reported regularly on Union progress. Brigadier General John S. Bowen, the commander at Grand Gulf, believed this to be the Union main effort and told Pemberton as much. However, during the first ten days of McClernand’s movement toward New Carthage, Pemberton actually believed that Grant was withdrawing to Memphis. He even designated two of his brigades to be sent off as reinforcements for the Army of Tennessee. Porter’s running of the batteries refocused Pemberton’s attention upon the Mississippi and prompted him to recall the two detached brigades. One day later, Union Colonel Benjamin H. Grierson embarked upon a spectacular cavalry raid that cut a swath through central Mississippi, drawing Pemberton’s attention away from Grant once again.

Grant, however, did not yet make his move to cross the river. When he directed McClernand to march to New Carthage, Grant had not yet decided whether he would cross to the east bank at Warrenton, ten miles below Vicksburg, or at Grand Gulf, thirty air miles below Vicksburg. By 26 April, he had decided on Grand Gulf. On that date, he ordered McClernand to move south to Hard Times, just upstream and opposite from Grand Gulf. Three of McClernand’s divisions traveled by boat, but elements of the fourth division (Osterhaus), followed by two divisions of McPherson’s corps, moved overland. Osterhaus opened a road to Hard Times that ran along Bayou Vidal and Lake Saint Joseph. Sherman’s corps remained at Young’s Point to protect the line of communication.

Vignette 1 (Grant’s orders for the march down river): “The following orders are published for the information and guidance of the army in the field in the present movement to obtain a foothold on the east bank of the Mississippi River, from which Vicksburg can be approached by practicable roads . . .

“6. Troops will be required to bivouac until proper facilities can be afforded for the transportation of camp equipage . . .

“9. As fast as the Thirteenth Army Corps [McClernand] advances, the Seventeenth Army Corps [McPherson] will take its place, and in its

turn will be followed in like manner by the Fifteenth Army Corps [Sherman] . . .

“12. The movement of troops from Milliken’s Bend to New Carthage will be so conducted as to allow the transportation of ten days’ supply of rations and half the allowance of ordnance required by previous orders.

“13. Commanders are authorized and enjoined to collect all the beef-cattle, corn, and other supplies necessary for the army on the line of march, but wanton destruction of property, taking of articles, unless for military purposes, insulting civilians, going into and searching houses without proper orders from division commanders, are positively prohibited. All such irregularities must be summarily punished.” (Headquarters, Department of the Tennessee, Special Orders No. 110, 20 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 3, 212-14.)

Vignette 2 (Pemberton’s initial response to news of the Union movement): “Also reported, but not yet confirmed, movement under McClernand, in large force, by land west of river and southward. Much doubt it.” (Pemberton to Cooper, 9 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 3, 729-30.)

Vignette 3 (Confederate commander at Grand Gulf on the day before the bombardment): “Reports indicate an immense force opposite me. Harrison is fighting them now.” (Bowen to Pemberton, 28 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 3, 797.)

(Pemberton replies): “Have you force enough to hold your position? If not, give me the smallest additional force with which you can.” (Pemberton to Bowen, 28 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 3, 797.)

(Bowen responds): “I advise that every man and gun that can be spared from other points be sent here.” (Bowen to Pemberton, 28 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 3, 797.)

Teaching Points: Operational decision-making, mobility operations, austere logistics plan, interpreting intelligence.

Situation 2: Bombardment of Grand Gulf. Grand Gulf was once an important river landing, but floods and disease had ravaged the town by the time the Civil War began. Then in 1862, Farragut’s flotilla burned the town during its expedition up to Vicksburg. On 12 March 1863, the Confederate brigade commanded by Brigadier General John S. Bowen began building fortifications at Grand Gulf, which would be

the first defensible spot downstream from Vicksburg in the event that Grant's Canal succeeded.

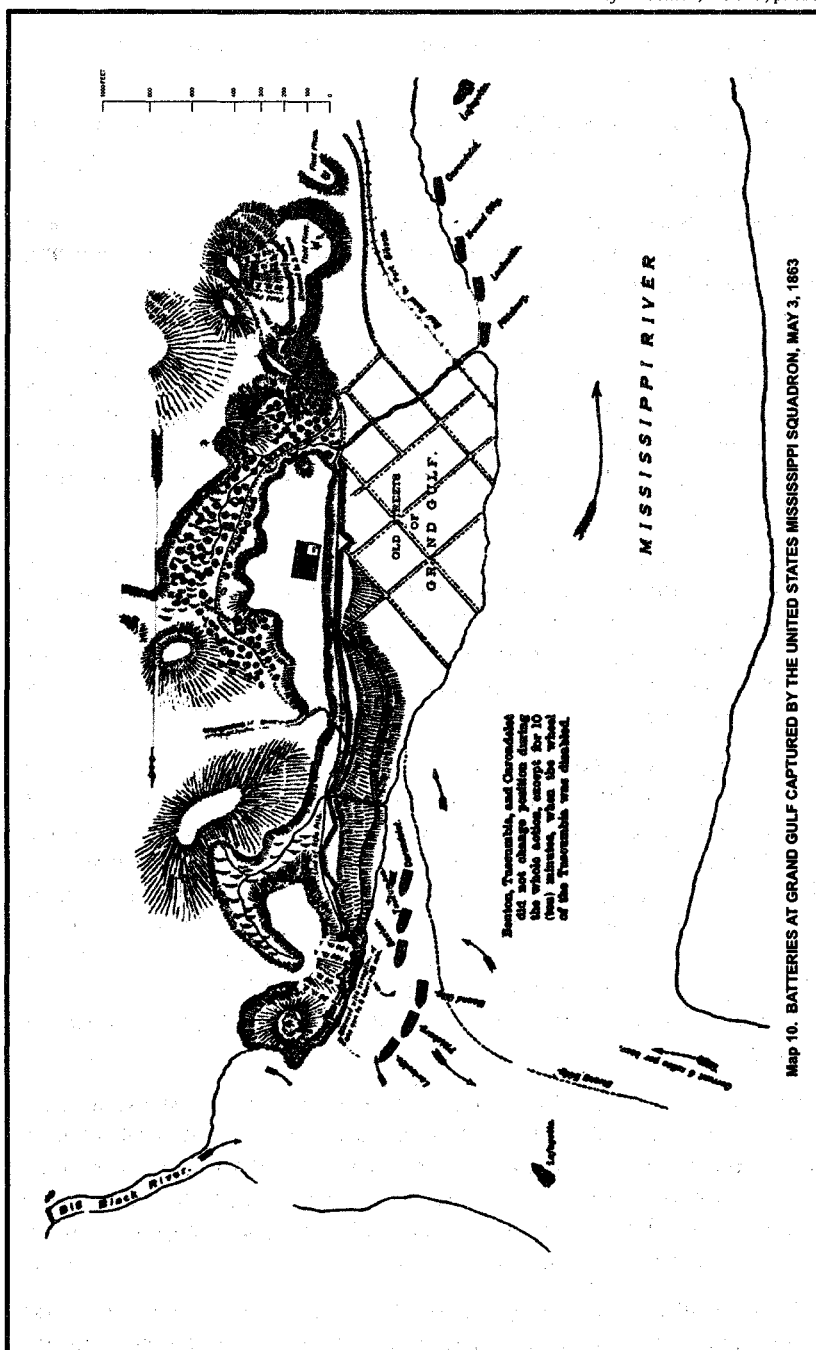
Bowen's men established two fortified batteries, approximately 1,000 yards apart, on either side of Grand Gulf's ruins (see map 10). Just upstream of the town was Fort Cobun, which they created by cutting a notch into the face of the bluff forty feet above river level, and piling the spoil to form a parapet forty feet thick. Fort Cobun mounted one 8-inch Dahlgren, one 30-pounder Parrott, and two 32 pounders. Downstream was Fort Wade, which stood about twenty feet above river level and approximately 300 yards back from the river. Fort Wade boasted one 100-pounder Blakeley rifle, one 8-inch Dahlgren, and two 32-pounder rifles. In addition, several field pieces stood within and between the fortified places. A portion of Bowen's infantry manned a line of rifle pits that connected the forts, but Bowen kept the bulk of his command behind the crests of the hills.

At 0730 on 29 April, the seven Union ironclads that had run the Vicksburg batteries cast off from Hard Times. Their mission was to silence the guns of Grand Gulf so that Grant's army could force a landing. Six transports carrying 10,000 men of McClelland's corps followed the ironclads. Grant himself would observe the action from aboard the tug *Ivy*.

Leading the way downstream were the *Pittsburg*, *Louisville*, *Mound City*, and *Carondelet*. These four City-Class gunboats steamed past Fort Cobun at 0800, firing volleys as they passed, and proceeded to Fort Wade. There, they came about, bows pointing back upstream, close in to the Mississippi bank, wheels churning just fast enough to hold them stationary in the current. Then, there ensued a brutal, close-range duel with the Confederate shore batteries. Meanwhile, the three larger ironclads began trading blows with Fort Cobun. *Benton* and *Tuscumbia* ran in close, while *Lafayette* stood off and fired from a distance.

Of the two actions, the Union bombardment of Fort Wade was the more successful. With some help from *Lafayette*, sent downstream by Porter, the City-Class boats succeeded in demolishing Fort Wade's parapet and dismounting two of the four Confederate guns. After several hours of pounding, Fort Wade fell silent, whereupon all of the ironclads massed against Fort Cobun.

Fort Cobun proved to be a tougher objective. Higher than Fort Wade, its fire was more effective, and it was better protected from the



Map 10

gunboats. Moreover, the fort was a more stable firing platform than were the Union gunboats, which struggled to hold their positions in the treacherous eddies that swept the river. The *Benton* took forty-seven hits, one demolishing the pilothouse and wounding the pilot and Rear Admiral Porter. Temporarily disabled, the *Benton* drifted out of the battle until new steering apparatus could be rigged. The *Tuscumbia* shuddered under the impact of no fewer than eighty-one Confederate projectiles. Several of her armor plates fractured, and others came loose. Finally, she lost power in one engine and floated helplessly downstream. The *Tuscumbia* would require major repairs before returning to service.

Porter called off the bombardment at 1300. His ships, mounting eighty-one large guns, had fired 2,500 rounds at the Confederate forts but had failed to destroy them. The Confederates, with just eight large-caliber guns, had scored over 200 hits on the ironclads, killing eighteen and wounding fifty-six Union personnel. Confederate casualties were three killed and nineteen wounded. Obviously, it would have been suicide to send in the unarmored troop transports. Grant, consequently, canceled the landing operation.

Later that evening, the Union gunboats returned to Grand Gulf and resumed their artillery duel with the Confederate batteries. Behind the ironclads, the Union transports and barges slipped by in the darkness, heading farther downstream.

Vignette 1 (Confederate commander's perspective): "Six gunboats, averaging ten guns, have been bombarding my batteries terrifically since 7 A.M. They pass and repass the batteries at the closest ranges. I cannot tell the effect of our shots. Six transports in sight, loaded with troops, but stationary. My loss as yet only 2 killed. The batteries, especially the lower ones, are badly torn to pieces. I cannot tell the result, but think that re-enforcements would hardly reach me in time to aid in the defense if they attempt to land." (Bowen to Pemberton, 29 April 1863, in *O.R.*, vol. 24, pt. 1, 575).

Vignette 2 (account from the commander of the gunboat Benton): "After getting the fleet in line, we, at 7:30, slowly steamed down[stream] toward the batteries at Grand Gulf. At 7:55 the enemy opened fire on the leading vessels; at 8:13 we opened fire from the forward battery upon the guns on the bluff [Fort Cobun], rounded to[,] with head upstream, and kept firing whenever a gun would bear, the enemy responding; while near the shore the enemy fired upon us with

musketry. At 9 a shell penetrated the thin iron on our starboard quarter and exploded in a stateroom, setting it on fire; it was speedily extinguished. At 9:05 a shell from No. 5 gun carried away the enemy's flagstaff; it was soon replaced. At 10:10, having gotten into an eddy, were obliged to round out [turn around]; did so, and fired with our port and stern guns when they would bear. We, in turning round, dropped downstream 1,500 yards and ran into the bank, to aid us in turning round. We then steamed up to the batteries on the bluff again and continued the engagement. At 12:25 rounded out and stood upstream to communicate with General Grant, who was on a tug. While going up used our stern guns. At 12:50 the enemy ceased firing at us, this vessel having been under fire four hours and eleven minutes . . . The following ammunition was expended: 70 9-inch 5-second shell; 40 9-inch 5-second shrapnel; 29 9-inch grape; 7 9-inch canister; 45 5-second 42-pounder rifle shell; 1 10-second 42 pounder rifle shell; 69 5-second 32-pounder shell; 30 10-second 32-pounder shell; 5 32-pounder solid shot; 11 32-pounder canister; 23 32-pounder grape; 9 50-pounder rifle shell; 8 50-pounder solid shot; a total of 347 fires. We were struck 47 times . . . The casualties were 7 men killed and 19 persons wounded..." (Report of Lieutenant Commander Greer, 30 April 1863, in *O.R. Navies*, vol. 24, 613-14.)

Vignette 3 (Porter's congratulatory order to his men reveals some impatience with the Army): "Those who have shared in the engagement of the 29th of April may always speak of it with honest pride. It is not our fault that the enemy's guns and munitions of war are not in our hands. Ours is the duty to silence batteries; it cannot be expected that we shall land and take possession." (General Order of Acting Rear Admiral Porter, 2 May 1863, in *O.R. Navies*, vol. 24, 626.)

Teaching Points: Terrain analysis, placement of defenses, naval gunfire in support of joint operations.

Stand 8

Grand Gulf: Fort Wade

Directions: Backtrack through Grand Gulf to the park headquarters and museum. There is a nominal admission charge. Ask the park personnel about conditions on the road to the Shaifer House (stand 10) (see map 9 on page 109).

Orientation: Fort Wade is located on the hill behind (north of) the museum buildings. It was the lower (downstream), fortified battery at

Grand Gulf. In 1863, the Mississippi came within three hundred yards of Fort Wade.

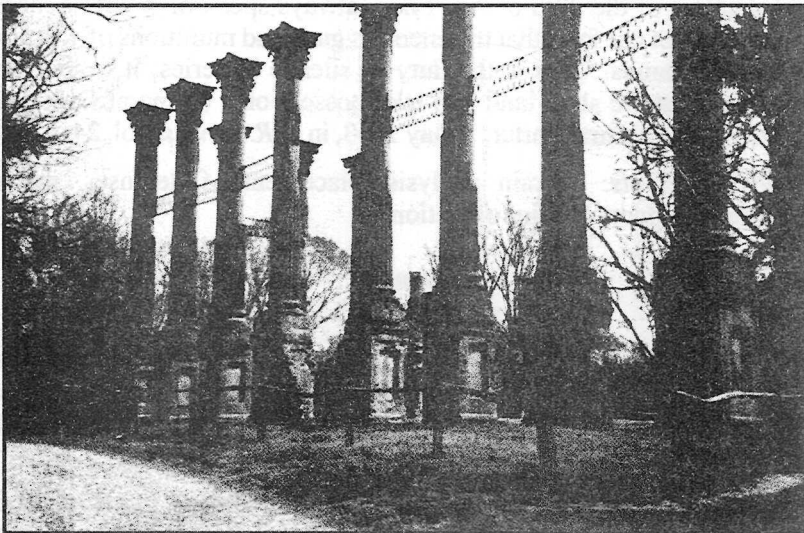
Teaching Points: Terrain analysis, placement of defenses.

Stand 9 Windsor (Bruinsburg)

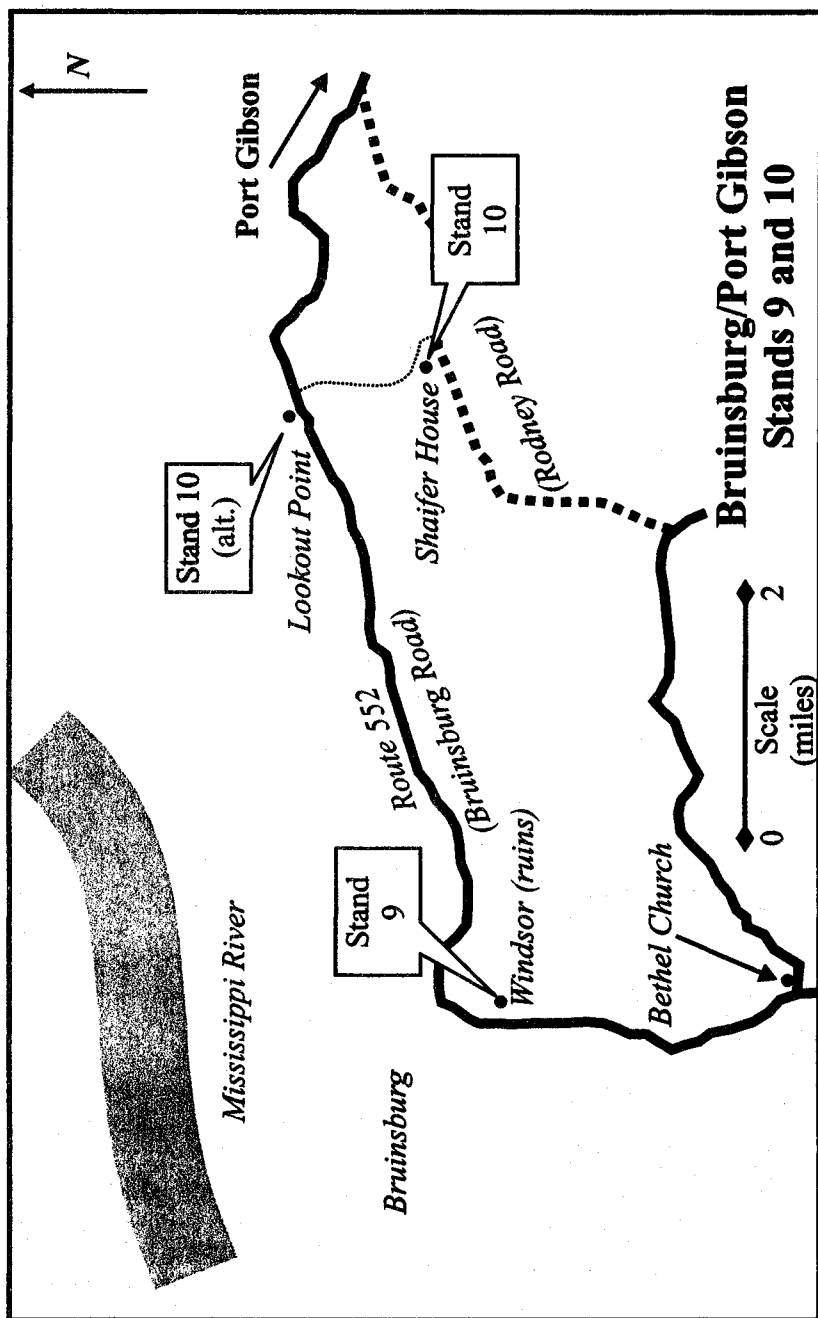
Directions: Turn left upon leaving the Grand Gulf museum. After 4.1 miles, bear right at the “Y” intersection. This road becomes Anthony Street in Port Gibson. Turn right on Flower Street (3.3 miles from the “Y” intersection), then right on Rodney Road (Route 552) 0.1 mile later. Travel approximately ten miles. Turn left at the sign marking the Windsor House (see map 11).

Orientation: Windsor House, once one of the most elegant residences in the South, was a landmark to riverboat pilots on the Mississippi. It survived the war, only to be destroyed by fire in 1890. The cotton field that was once Bruinsburg is approximately two miles west of Windsor. A road ran from Bruinsburg to the top of the bluff not far from Windsor.

Situation: With the Union failure to silence the guns of Grand Gulf, Grant decided to proceed downstream and stage his crossing of the Mississippi at Rodney. Gunboats and transports ran past Grand Gulf



The ruins of Windsor, near Bruinsburg (1997)



Map 11